

1 ***In the Claims:***

2 Please add claims 2-21, and then cancel claim 1 without Prejudice as follows. All
3 pending claims, whether or not amended, are presented below for the Examiner's
4 convenience and will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

5 1. (Canceled)

6
7 2. (New) A method for a computer repairing itself to an operational status at any
8 time during operation, the method comprising the computer-executed steps of:

9 booting from a first hard disk drive boot device disposed within a main computer
10 hardware box of the computer;

11 then, in response to receiving a signal indicating a need for repair of the computer
12 during the booting or during any operating state, booting from a second hard disk drive boot
13 device; the second hard disk drive boot device being physically present within the main
14 computer hardware box of the computer prior to receiving the signal indicating a need for
15 repair; and

16 then repairing software on the first hard disk drive boot device while booted from the
17 second hard disk drive boot device and selectively either: (i) maintaining operation of the
18 computer from the second boot device to restore operational status of the computer during
19 repairing of the software on the first hard disk device, or (ii) changing to operation of the
20 computer from the second boot device to the first boot device to restore operational status of
21 the computer,

22 wherein the signal is generated by a user altering the state of a physical switch
23 different from an on-off switch of the computer and exposed on an exterior surface of the
24 main computer hardware box of the computer.

25
26 3. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein the step of repairing software
27 comprises:

28 automatically repairing software on the first boot device.

29
30 4. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein the step of automatically repairing
31 software comprises:

1 automatically repairing software on the first boot device without further direction
2 from the user.

3
4 5. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein the step of automatically repairing
5 software comprises:
6 repairing software on the first boot device according to preset preferences.
7

8 6. (New) The method of claim 5, wherein the repairing according to preset
9 preferences comprises:

10 repairing according to whether
11 to recover data;
12 to run a virus check;
13 to reformat the first boot device;
14 to revert to a backup; or
15 to run diagnostics.
16

17 7. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein the step of repairing software
18 comprises:

19 reformatting the first boot device; and
20 then copying software onto the first boot device.
21

22 8. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein the step of repairing software
23 comprises:

24 resetting parameters in a persistent memory; and
25 then copying software onto the first boot device.
26

27 9. (New) The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of:
28 directing a user to re-boot from the first boot device.
29

30 10. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein before the step of booting from the
31 second boot device, the following step is performed: installing software onto the second boot
32 device.
33

1 11. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein the step of installing software onto
2 the second boot device comprises one method from the following set of methods:

- 3 a. installing software onto the second boot device;
4 b. copying installed software onto the second boot device;
5 c. copying installation software onto the second boot device; and
6 d. writing onto the second boot device a version of an operating environment running
7 as a result of the boot from the first boot device.

8
9 12. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein the step of installing software onto
10 the second boot device comprises one method from the following set of methods:

- 11 a. installing software onto the second boot device;
12 b. copying installed software onto the second boot device;
13 c. copying installation software onto the second boot device; and
14 d. writing onto the second boot device a template of an operating environment
15 running as a result of the boot from the first boot device.

16
17 13. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein after the step of installing and before
18 the step of booting from the second boot device, the following step is performed:
19 updating the software installed onto the second boot device.

20
21 14. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein after the step of installing and before
22 the step of booting from the second boot device, the following step is performed:
23 protecting the second boot device from further modification.

24
25 15. (New) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of protecting comprises one
26 of:
27 switching the second boot device to a state of unavailability; and
28 switching the second boot device to a read-only state.

29
30 16. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein before the step of repairing software
31 the following step is performed:
32 offering a user a choice of thoroughness of repair.

1 17. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein before the step of booting from the
2 second boot device, the following step is performed:

3 automatically monitoring an operating environment running as a result of the booting
4 from the first boot device.

5
6 18. (New) The method of claim 17, further comprising the step of:
7 detecting an undesirable change in the operating environment; and
8 generating the signal indicating a need for repair in response to the detection.

9
10 19. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein before the step of booting from the
11 second boot device, the following step is performed:

12 automatically searching for boot devices.

13 20. (New) A method for a computer repairing itself to an operational status at any
14 time during operation, the method comprising the computer-executed steps of:

15 booting from a first hard disk drive boot device disposed within a main computer
16 hardware box of the computer;

BN 17 then, in response to receiving a signal indicating a need for repair of the computer
18 during the booting or during any operating state, booting from a second hard disk drive boot
19 device; the second hard disk drive boot device being physically present within the main
20 computer hardware box of the computer prior to receiving the signal indicating a need for
21 repair; and

22 then repairing software on the first hard disk drive boot device while booted from the
23 second hard disk drive boot device and selectively either: (i) maintaining operation of the
24 computer from the second boot device to restore operational status of the computer during
25 repairing of the software on the first hard disk device, or (ii) changing to operation of the
26 computer from the second boot device to the first boot device to restore operational status of
27 the computer;

28 wherein before the step of repairing software the following step is performed:
29 offering a user a choice of thoroughness of repair selected from the set of repairs consisting
30 of a quick repair that re-installs or copies template software without first re-formatting, a
31 better repair that performs a high-level re-format before that copy or re-installation of
32 software, and a best repair that performs a low-level re-format before copying over or re-
33 installing software.

34 21. (New) A computer system comprising:

1 one or more peripheral devices including a means for communication, an coupling
2 member, and a capability for emitting light;

3 a receptacle mechanically coupled with said computer system for engaging said
4 coupling member of said peripheral device; and

5 a port for communicatively coupling said computer system and said peripheral
6 devices coupled with receptacle.

7